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APPLICATION

10

FOR UNITED STATES LETTERS PATENT

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SPECIFICATION

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TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

25 BE IT KNOWN THAT I, DAVID A. SMITH, a citizen of UNITED
STATES OF AMERICA, have invented a new and useful ANIMAL
FEEDER of which the following is a specification:

ANIMAL FEEDER

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BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Field of the Invention

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The present invention relates to animal feeding devices and more particularly pertains to a new animal feeding device for effectively holding and distributing animal feed.

15 Description of the Prior Art

The use of animal feeding devices is known in the prior art. While these devices fulfill their respective, particular objectives and requirements, the need remains for a device that holds animal feed and dispenses it in such a manner as make it easily accessible by large animals such as deer while retaining the remaining feed within a housing to protect it from the elements. Such a device should also have multiple mounting variations.

25 SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention meets the needs presented above by including a plate onto which the feed is dispensed for spreading out the feed so that it is easily accessible to deer and other animals.

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Another object of the present invention is to provide a new animal feeding device that includes mountings for mounting the device on a limb or on a post.

5 To this end, the present invention generally comprises a housing including a bottom wall and a peripheral wall that is attached to and extends upwardly from the bottom wall. The peripheral wall has an upper edge defining an opening into an interior of the housing. A cover is removably positionable over the opening for selectively opening or closing
10 the housing. Each of a pair of mounts is positioned on the peripheral wall. A funnel is positioned in the housing and includes a spout extending outwardly through the bottom wall. The funnel has an upper perimeter is abutted against and extending along an inner surface of the peripheral wall. A plate has an upper side that has a central area having a raised
15 portion thereon. Each of a plurality of rods has a first end attached to the bottom wall and a second end attached to the plate such that the spout is vertically aligned with the raised portion. A limb mounting assembly includes a pair of male couplers and a tether. Each of the male couplers is selectively coupled with one of the mounts and the tether is attached to the
20 male couplers for selectively hanging the housing.

There has thus been outlined, rather broadly, the more important features of the invention in order that the detailed description thereof that follows may be better understood, and in order that the present
25 contribution to the art may be better appreciated. There are additional features of the invention that will be described hereinafter and which will form the subject matter of the claims appended hereto.

The objects of the invention, along with the various features of
30 novelty which characterize the invention, are pointed out with particularity in the claims annexed to and forming a part of this disclosure.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The invention will be better understood and objects other than those
5 set forth above will become apparent when consideration is given to the
following detailed description thereof. Such description makes reference
to the annexed drawings wherein:

Figure 1 is a schematic perspective view of an animal feeder
10 according to the present invention.

Figure 2 is a schematic cross-sectional view of the present
invention.

15 Figure 3 is a schematic cross-sectional view taken along line 3-3 of
Figure 2 of the present invention.

Figure 4 is a schematic perspective view of mounting variations of
the present invention.
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DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

With reference now to the drawings, and in particular to Figures 1
through 4 thereof, a new animal feeding device embodying the principles
25 and concepts of the present invention and generally designated by the
reference numeral 10 will be described.

As best illustrated in Figures 1 through 4, the animal feeder 10
generally comprises a housing 12 including a bottom wall 14 and a
30 peripheral wall 16 that is attached to and extends upwardly from the
bottom wall 14. The peripheral wall 16 has an upper edge 18 defining an
opening into an interior of the housing 12. A cover 20 is removably
positionable over the opening for selectively opening or closing the

housing 12. At least one securing member 22 selectively secures the cover to the housing 12 in a closed position. The securing member 22 preferably includes one or more screws or bolts extending through a lip of the cover 20. The bottom wall 14 has a generally rectangular shape. The peripheral wall 16 includes a rear wall 24, a front wall 26, and a pair of side walls 28. Each of a pair of mounts 30 is positioned on one of the side walls 28. Each of the mounts 30 has a threaded well 32 extending therein. A plurality of mounts 30 is also attached to and extends outwardly from the rear wall 24.

A funnel 36 is preferably positioned in the housing 12 and includes a spout 38 extending outwardly through the bottom wall 14. The funnel 36 has an upper perimeter 40 that is abutted against and extends along an inner surface of the peripheral wall 16. The funnel 36 ensures that all grain or seeds positioned within the housing 12 exits the housing 12 through the spout 38.

A plate 42 has an upper side 44 that has a central area having a raised portion 46. The raised portion 46 has a frusto-conical shape. The plate 42 has generally the same size and shape as the bottom wall 14. Each of a plurality of rods 48 has a first end 50 attached to the bottom wall 14 and a second end 52 attached to the plate 42 such that the spout 38 is vertically aligned with the raised portion 46. When the contents of the housing 12 are deposited outwardly through the spout 38, the raised portion 46 spreads out the contents for easy feeding adjacent to edges of the plate 42.

A limb mounting assembly 54 for mounting the housing from a tree limb includes a pair of male couplers 56 and a tether 58. Each of the male couplers 56 is selectively coupled with one of the mounts 30. The tether

58 is attached to the male couplers 56 for selectively hanging the housing 12. The animal feeder 10 also preferably includes a post mounting assembly 60 for mounting the housing 12 on a vertical post or on a tree trunk. The post mounting assembly 60 includes a panel 62 and a fastening member 64. The panel 62 has a plurality of apertures 66 extending therethrough. Each of the apertures 66 is positioned for receiving one of the mounts 30 on the rear wall 24. Screws 68, or other securing members are extendable through the apertures 66 and into the mounts 30 on the rear wall 24 to secure the panel 62 to the housing 12. The fastening member 64 is attached to the panel 62 for selectively extending around a post, tree trunk or other vertical member. The fastening member 64 preferably includes a pair of chains to be secured around the vertical member though straps may also be utilized. The panel 62 may have a rounded shape for easy positioning around a tree trunk.

15 In use, the housing is filled with the type of feed as depending on the type of animal to be fed. The housing is either mounted to a vertical post or post-like structure, or it is hung from a limb. The feed is dispensed through spout and is spread outwardly on the plate. The food builds upwardly to the spout so that it stops dispensing outwardly from the housing. For this reason, it is important the distance from the raised portion to the spout is less than two inches and preferable no greater than one inch. As an animal eats the food from the plate, additional food is dispensed onto the plate.

25 With respect to the above description then, it is to be realized that the optimum dimensional relationships for the parts of the invention, to include variations in size, materials, shape, form, function and manner of operation, assembly and use, are deemed readily apparent and obvious to one skilled in the art, and all equivalent relationships to those illustrated

in the drawings and described in the specification are intended to be encompassed by the present invention.

Therefore, the foregoing is considered as illustrative only of the
5 principles of the invention. Further, since numerous modifications and
changes will readily occur to those skilled in the art, it is not desired to
limit the invention to the exact construction and operation shown and
described, and accordingly, all suitable modifications and equivalents may
be resorted to, falling within the scope of the invention.